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## **Driver Responsibility Legislation Headed to Full Senate**

**(LANSING)** – Michigan’s habitually bad drivers will have to pay more to keep their driving privileges and to compensate for the danger they create on state roads under legislation passing the Senate Transportation Committee, state Senator Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac, announced today.

“Drunk driving, reckless driving and road rage-related incidents have made Michigan’s roads and highways more dangerous than ever for our state’s law abiding, responsible motorists,” Gilbert, chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, said. “The time has come for us to send a serious message to those drivers who threaten the greater public’s safety with their reckless behavior behind the wheel.”

According to the “Driver Responsibility Program,” a driver who racks up seven or more points in a two-year period will be charged with a \$100 financial assessment, and \$50 for each additional point above seven points. Additional assessments will be imposed each year for two years for certain violations such as killing or injuring a police officer, alcohol/controlled substance-related offenses, driving with a suspended license, and driving without insurance.

“With Michigan’s roads and highways busier than ever, we need to do something further to get the attention of drivers with the worst driving records,” Gilbert said. “Our message is: if you continually ignore traffic safety laws, it’s going to cost you.”

A similar program has been successfully implemented in New Jersey, with other states such as Texas, Rhode Island, Ohio, California, Florida and Pennsylvania considering similar legislation. Although New Jersey is one of the 10 most populous states in the nation, it has the lowest number of fatalities per mile driven. According to the state’s transportation officials, New Jersey has reported a 24 percent decline in driving-related fatalities thanks to the program.

Senate Bill 509 awaits consideration from the full Senate.